

### **Cost of Letter Up One Cent**

Latest word is in on the average cost of a business letter, on which the Dartnell Institute of Business Research has been keeping annual tab since 1953: price went up only one cent to \$3.20 per letter in 1972. This was the lowest increase over a 10-year period which saw annual jumps recorded ranging between 5 and 35 cents per letter.

The levelling off of letter costs in 1972 was due to several factors which acted in concert to cancel one another out, explained Robert S. Minor of Dartnell. "For one thing, wages did not increase as much as usual in this period of the wage freeze. Also, the tenor of the times led to some increases in productivity in many offices. On the other hand, postage rates increased during the period being measured for the first time since 1968," Minor noted.

The Dartnell letter-cost study was first conducted in 1930 when many top secretaries were paid \$25 a week and the cost of a business letter (under a different formula) was under \$1 each. By 1960 the letter cost had risen to \$1.83, and by 1970 had passed \$3.

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